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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 23 June 2010, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. St. Aimee ..... (Saint Lucia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (A/AC.109/2010/L.10)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.10: Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (continued)

2. **The Chairperson** drew the Committee's attention to revisions to section VII, Montserrat, section VIII, Pitcairn, and section X, Turks and Caicos Islands, previously circulated.

3. *Sections VII, VIII and X, as revised, were adopted.*

4. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.10, as revised, was adopted.*

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/AC.109/2010/L.11)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.11: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

5. **The Chairperson** noted that paragraph 7 (d) of the draft resolution would request the Special Committee to develop and finalize a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories. That had not yet been done. Noting that elements of a proposed programme of work had previously been circulated, he suggested that the Special Committee should defer its consideration of draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.11 pending agreement on inclusion of a programme of work embodying greater specificity.

6. *It was so decided.*

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/AC.109/2010/L.12)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.12: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations

7. **The Chairperson** welcomed the information provided at the Pacific Regional Seminar, held at Nouméa in May 2010, and called on the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system to assist Non-Self-Governing Territories in achieving their aspirations. He recalled that the Special Committee, at its 7th meeting, had approved a request by Mr. Carlyle Corbin, an independent adviser on governance, to address the Committee.

8. **Mr. Corbin** noted that, in the context of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the General Assembly had called for the intensification of the provision of information on decolonization to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, as well as for examination of compliance with the right of the peoples of the Territories to ownership of and control over their natural resources. In some cases, notably Guam and the United States Virgin Islands, that right was not sufficiently taken into account. Cooperation with administering Powers was also a concern. The withdrawal of formal cooperation by some Powers prevented the Special Committee from engaging in interactive dialogue. Those issues should be addressed in the next Decade.

9. He welcomed, nonetheless, the flexibility demonstrated by the United Kingdom during the Second Decade regarding the hosting of a Caribbean regional seminar and visiting missions to Bermuda and the Turks and Caicos Islands. France, too, had shown flexibility with regard to New Caledonia.

10. In contrast the United States of America had refused to host visiting missions or regional seminars in Guam and the United States Virgin Islands, and, in 2008, had declared that those Territories were a domestic concern. The Territories had hoped for a response by the Special Committee, which thus far had not been forthcoming.

11. During the Second Decade, the General Assembly had recognized that self-determination was a fundamental human right, but its calls for collaboration between the Special Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Human Rights Committee, as well as with the Caribbean Community and the African Union, had not been heeded, the Special Committee having merely taken note of the work of those bodies and organizations. Similarly, the calls by the Assembly for an annual review of decolonization resolutions had resulted in only one report, in 2009. In particular, the Caribbean Community, in whose area most Territories were located, had noted that reporting on decolonization was insufficiently substantive.

12. Further, calls for the formation of groups of experts from the Territories had not been reflected in the resolutions of the Special Committee; the Special Committee had also failed to invite the governments of the Territories to participate in its meetings at an appropriate level. A recommendation for cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee and for representation of the Territories as observers on the functional commissions of the Council had also not borne fruit. Most of the Territories were associate members of either the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean or the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

13. A suggestion had been made that the title of the agenda item on implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies should be changed to "Support to the Non-Self-Governing Territories from the United Nations system", in an effort to make the agencies more aware of their responsibilities in that regard.

14. A 2007 report by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (E/AC.51/2007/2/Add.3) had questioned the relevance, quality and utility of decolonization documents, and noted the risk of the loss of institutional memory, since there was no system for recording and transferring expertise. However, that report had not been considered by the Special Committee.

15. Noting that self-determination was a fundamental right, he observed that current dependency models, however sophisticated, did not meet minimum standards of political equality and were not consistent with democratic governance.

16. He commended the Special Committee on its adoption of action-oriented recommendations. For their part, administering Powers must recognize their responsibility to engage in interactive dialogue. However, the adoption of draft resolutions and the de-listing of Territories did not constitute success, which could only be measured in terms of the achievement of full self-governance.

17. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.12 was adopted.*

18. **Ms. Eloeva** (Russian Federation) said that her Government consistently advocated the right of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination and independence. However, consideration of the issue in the Economic and Social Council distracted the Council from its primary function, and should not form part of its agenda.

Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/AC.109/2010/L.13)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.13: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories

19. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.13 was adopted.*

Fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/AC.109/2010/L.17)

Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.17: Fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

20. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2010/L.17 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.